1609/4982

REMARKS

FOR

The MAGISTRATES and COUNCIL of the City of *Edinburgh*,

UPON A

PAMPHLET, signed by Ten GENTLEMEN,

ENTITULED,

OBSERVATIONS by the Committees of the Writers to the Signet, and of the Heretors and Householders of *Edinburgh*, upon a MEMORIAL for the Magistrates and Council, concerning the Affair of the POORS-RATE, *&c.*

THE Committee, or, at leaſt, the Authors of this elaborate Performance, we can eaſily admit, ſpent very little Time in preparing for it, the Fertility of their Genius being ſufficient to diſcover what no Length of Time or Reflection could readily ſuggeſt to almoſt any other *Obſerver*. Had indeed the whole Wiſdom of their ſuppoſed Conſtituents centered in this Committee, 'tis more than probable the World would have been deprived of a Species of Reaſoning, that could hardly reſult from a great Aſſembly accuſtomed to judge more agreeable to the ordinary and common Senſe of Mankind: The Invention of the few being often-found to hit upon what is apt to eſcape the more deliberate Wiſdom of the many.

 A vulgar

1609/4982

A vulgar Genius might have thought, that pointing out the annual and progreſſive Decay of Donations and caſual Charity, the Short-comings of the ordinary Collections; in a word, the Inequality, precarious State, and Inſufficiency of the Funds, that could in any Degree be relyed upon, were good Reaſons for inſtantly applying to the Legiſlature, before the approaching Hazard of the Charity Work-houſe ſhould actually overtake it, and compell the Managers to diſmiſs a Part of the Poor, after they had felt the Comfort of being regularly ſubſiſted, and uſefully employed: But the Committee could diſcover nothing in all this, and roundly give out, *That there is not one Word ſaid in the Memorial for the Council, from the one End of it to the other, to ſhew that there is any Neceſſity for ſuch Law at this Time.*

This however is but a ſlight Specimen of the Committee's Method of Reaſoning, the inimitable Novelty of which will be beſt underſtood by taking down a compleat Paſſage from the ſecond Page of the *Obſervations*. " In the firſt " Paragraph of the Memorial for the Council, theſe Propo- " ſitions are either expreſsly laid down, or plainly implied, " *viz. That a Beggar reſorting from the Country*, let " his Circumſtances be what they will, *is by no means in-* " *titled to the Charity of the Inhabitants of this City.* " That, *removing the Indigent and miſerable from this* " *Metropolis*, though but to the Diſtance of a Yard with- " out its Walls, *is relieving them, and uſefully employing* " *ſuch of the Poor as are capable of Induſtry, and is a* " *Thing worthy of the Attention of a Man of extenſive* " *Genius and Benevolence*; and (according to Page 6th, " about the middle) that the paying of Money, by the " Compulſion of quartering, and ſummary Diſtreſs and Sale " of a Man's Goods, *is* the proper Exerciſe of *one of the* " *moſt amiable Duties of Humanity*; Propoſitions very fit " indeed for maintaining the Cauſe for which they are laid " down, but every one of them contradictory to, and de- " ſtructive

" ſtructive of that univerſal Love and Charity, which, by " its being an Act of Choice, and by that alone can ren- " der us amiable in the Sight of GOD, or of any good " Man. From this Swatch of the learned Gentleman's Pro- " poſitions for founding his Argument," &c.

Was any Man to caſt his Eye upon the above Paragraph, would he not imagine the Council had maintained a ſtrange Set of Propoſitions indeed, *That a Beggar from the Country, be his Circumſtances what they would, was by no Means intitled to the Charity of the Inhabitants of this City*! altho' it be well known to ſome of the Committee, who have been Managers of the Poor's Houſe, that caſual Supplies were never refuſed to ſtranger Beggars, where their Circumſtances made it reaſonable. It has been thought meet, by the Wiſdom of the Nation, that each Pariſh ſhould maintain their own Poor; that idle Vagrants ſhould not be indulged; if the contrary appear more reaſonable to the Wiſdom of this Committee, who can help it? And how ſtrange does this appear, that the Council ſhould maintain, *That removing the Indigent and miſerable from this Metropolis, tho' but to the Diſtance of a Yard without its Walls, is relieving them, and uſefully employing ſuch of the Poor as are capable of Induſtry, and a Thing worthy of the Attention of a Man of extenſive Genius and Benevolence?*

Where did the Committee find all this? Surely not in the Memorial for the Council; the firſt Paragraph of which runs in theſe Words; " Nothing could be more worthy of the At- " tention of a Man of extenſive Genius and Benevolence, " than a Scheme for relieving the indigent and miſerable, " uſefully employing ſuch of the poor as are capable of any " Sort of Induſtry, and removing, from this Metropolis, " the great Numbers of clamorus Beggars, daily reſorting " from all Parts of the Country, and infeſting the Streets, " Houſes and Shops, altho' by no Means intitled to the " Charity of the Inhabitants." And, in Page 6th, after touching on the Advantages of an equal Proviſion, the Memorial

for

for the Council concludes thus: "But, if an unequal Scheme "shall ſtill have the Preference *with ſome*, Is it a hard Con- "cluſion to ſuppoſe, that this can ariſe from no commendable "Motive, not to ſay, from the ungenerous Deſire of chuſing "to exeem themſelves from one of the moſt amiable Duties of Humanity?"

Superlative Invention in the Commitee, to find in what is above, that turning the Poor without the Walls of the City, was relieving them; and uſefully employing ſuch as are capable of Induſtry; or, that the paying Money by Compulſion, and ſummary Diſtreſs, is the proper Exercile of one of the moſt amiable Duties of Humanity! Sure no ordinary Genius could make ſuch notabl Diſcoveries; and by the like candid Interpretation, a moſt benevolent Scheme by the INGENUITY of the OBSERVERS may be found *fraight with Deſtruction*; an equal Meaſure turned into an Engine of univerſal Ruin; the Ammendment of the moſt honourable Society, in this Part of the Kingdom, for relieving "ſuch "of the Inhabitants, whoſe real Rents are under 3 *l.* have "no Buſineſs, and are in poor Circumſtances," *found ſufficient to make one ſtand aghaſt at the projected Scheme of Power and Influence reſulting from the Luſt of Dominion, a Paſſion as ſtrong in ſome Men as the Love of Money in others, whereby the incorporated Trades may be made to dance to the Tune of the Publick Good, as ſet by their Leaders, or be taxed.*---Thus plain Reaſon and common Senſe is turned into an Harlequin, or rather moddell'd into a *nouvele* Piece of Machinery, that, in the Hands of a skilfull Operator or Engineer cannot only deceive the Vulgar and perplex their Underſtandings, but produce the moſt aſtoniſhing Phænomena; may perhaps metamorphoſe our Capital City into a Deſolate Village, a ſtupenduous Ruin, or, what is infinitely worſe, a Company of Slaves depending upon the incontrollable and arbitray Will of their *ſovereign Lords and Maſters*.

But let us turn to the benign Concluſion of this Paſſage of the Obſervations. *The Propoſitions for the Magiſtrates are very fit indeed for maintaining the Cauſe for which*

they

they are laid down, but every one of them contradictory to, and destructive of that universal Love and Charity, which by being an Act of Choice, and that alone can render us amiable in the Sight of God, or of any good Man.----The natural Contrast of this carries along with it an Idea that may be felt in its full Force without clothing it with Language,---- But we forbear.-----Common Humanity, Compassion for the Species, when labouring of inveterate Prejudices, we admit pleads some Allevation, seeing these often render the Mind impenetrable to Truth, and throws such a Disguise over the Understanding, that the plainest or most engaging Proposition may appear intricate, or even in the Attire of Deformity itself. If that was the Case of the Committee, we pity their Misfortune, and forgive their Indiscretion; and, if otherways, we leave them to the Chastisement of their own Reflections; and without Scruple conclude, that where a regular Provision for the Poor is established by Law, the chearful and benevolent Compliance, by contributing one's Share, is equally amiable and acceptable, as if no such Rule had ever been made.

Having thus given a Specimen of the Reasoning of the *Acute Observers*, it is hoped the Publick will excuse us, in not chusing to follow them through other Labyrinths of the same Kind;--- a few may be touched upon occasionally, and as shortly as possible; but we shall not willingly pass over any Facts mentioned in the Observations, appearing in the smallest Degree material; in doing which, we shall aim at nothing, but stating plainly what must appear to the Satisfaction of every Inhabitant who will take the Trouble to look at the Books of the Charity Work-house, or have Recourse to other Vouchers referred to.

1*mo*, The *Observers*, Page 13th, notice, that before mentioning any Short-coming of the Collections at the Church-Doors,---*the learned Gentleman* (as they call him) *finding his Employers straitned to make this good, he answers*, in the first Place, *with an Account of the annual Decay of ca-*

sual

ſual Charity in Donations and Boxes. Whether this be true or not is not worth examining, as 'tis nothing to the preſent Queſtion: And however the Gentleman may flouriſh and declaim, he'll ſcarcely perſuade any Man, that the Expectation of Charities of this Kind could be relied on, as there did not exiſt any Data on which to compute, at laying the Scheme for Support of the Work-houſe.

Perhaps the Committee did not find their Account in examining into the Truth of the annual Decay of Caſual Charity; but that does not make the Account, exhibited on the 3d Page of the Council's *Memorial*, ceaſe to be true;---from thence it appears, that the Decay was progreſſive and conſiderable; the firſt Year being upwards of 437 *l. Sterl.* and the laſt not two Shillings above 139 *l.* and the firſt ſix Months of the Current Year not 20 *l.* and yet without any Declamation it is abſolutely certain, before opening the Houſe, the Subſcribers had a particular Eye, not only to the Sums appropriate, but to "ſuch Contributions as as ſhall be thereto made by the ſeve-"ral Societies or Corporations, within the City, and other "piouſly diſpoſed Perſons." But, ſay the Gentlemen, *No Man can be perſuaded, that Charities of this Kind could be relied on, as there did not exiſt any Data upon which to compute, at laying the Scheme for Support of the Work-houſe.* What Charm there may be in the Word *Data* we know not; But, in fact, Charities of this Kind were relied on;---Men of ordinary Capacities judging from what uſually happens, and what actually had happened to the Charity Work-houſe in *Glaſgow*, who, at this Day, have laid out at Intereſt upwards of 2200 *l.* Capital, ariſing from caſual Donations and Mortifications.

2*do*, As to the Decay of the ordinary Collections ſince the 1740, which before that Period were ſomewhat upwards of 1200 *l. per annum*, ſay the *Obſervers, a Set of Figures is exhibited for this*, concluding, "Thus it appears, "that the ordinary Collections are on the Decline." But had not theſe Gentlemen Acceſs to the Books, to know that

the

the *Abſtract* of theſe Collections, on the fourth Page of the Council's *Memorial*, was truly genuine? Whence it appeared, that at a Medium, ſince the 1740, they amount only to 1107 *l.* 9 *s.* 5 *d.* and as the Computation made by the original Contributors to the Houſe, was from the Collections preceeding the 1740, was it not natural, for ſhewing the Decay, to ſtrike the Medium from that Period and downwards? But ſay the *Obſervers*, *why not add the extraordinary Collections which would raiſe the Medium near to what it was before the* 1740; why truly, becauſe extraordinary Collections before that Time were not made for the Begging Poor; beſides, Reliance upon them is not only precarious to the laſt Degree, the extraordinary Collection in 1744, not equalling one Half of that in the 1746; but the Method itſelf altogether unequal, Numbers contributing nothing by extraordinary Collections at the Places of public Worſhip.

3*tio*, The *Obſervers*, Page 14, make a Queſtion, if it can be thought, *becauſe it was not ſuggeſted, or did not occur to the Committee of Heretors at writing their* Memorial, *that we don't know that there has been an extraordinary Collection ſince the* 1746, *which raiſed* 600 l. Sterl. *and that by Means thereof the Poor-Houſe was, at cloſing its Accompts for the Year ending the firſt of* July *laſt*, 643 l. 3 s. 1½ d. Sterl. *in hand*, viz. 433 l. 17 s. 11 d. *in Proviſions and other Neceſſaries paid for, and* 209 l. 5 s. 2½ d. *in Caſh in the Treaſurer's Hand. Is it not amazing, that thoſe who have the Books at command for writing from, ſhould never mention theſe Things, but leave them to be popt out by others? Is it not more aſtoniſhing, that for all this they will ſay,* "That the Collections have greatly decayed, *&c?*

Could any Thing from that Quarter prove amazing, this certainly would? Theſe Gentlemen had full Acceſs to know, that of the 600 *l.* collected from Houſe to Houſe in the 1747, 400 *l.* was appropriated for *New Bedlam*, and the other

ther 200 *l.* for erecting a Building for Weaving the Cloaths of the Charity Work-houſe; where then is the Ground of Aſtoniſhment, for not conſidering this, when mentioning the ordinary Collections for the Maintenance of the Poor? Neither was it firſt popt out by theſe diligent *Obſervers*; it being in general mentioned, Page 5th of the Council's *Memorial*, altho' the Sum was not taken down, as having nothing to do with the ordinary Expence of the Charity Work-houſe. Or does the *Obſervers* Amazement ariſe from the above-mentioned Balance in the Treaſurer's Hands, or the Stock of Proviſions and Neceſſaries paid for at cloſing his Accompts for the Year ending the firſt of *July* laſt? Had theſe Gentlemen look'd back for the three preceeding Quarters, they would have found in every one of them a Balance due to the Treaſurer, the laſt of them upwards of 100 *l.* and the ſecond Quarter of the preceeding Year a Balance due to him of upwards of 283 *l. Sterling.* But for the Satisfaction of others, who have had much leſs Acceſs than theſe Gentlemen to know whence ſuch Differences ariſe, we muſt remark, that, to the great Benefit of the Houſe, large Quantities of Meal, and other Proviſions are always bought for ready Money, when the Markets are low, and the Payments made by the Treaſurer, altho' not in Caſh by the ordinary Funds. This ſometimes gave Riſe to a conſiderable Balance in his Favours, but, at *July* 1748, there was 255 Bolls Meal leſs upon hand than at the End of the preceeding Year, becauſe, in the Months of *May* and *June* 1748, the ordinary Time of buying Meal, the Markets roſe, which made the Treaſurer, with Advice of the ordinary Managers, delay making a Purchaſe till a more favourable Opportunity, ſo that the Balance at that Time was conſiderably higher than at the End of any other Year, altho' by the Way, the Balance and Stock on hand at that Time, taken jointly, was conſiderably leſs than at the End of the preceeding Year; and ſure no prudent Man will blame the laying up Proviſions, when to be had, at the cheapeſt Rate.

or

or conceive it adviſeable to delay, applying for a regular and well eſtabliſhed Proviſion by Law, till ſuch Time as the Stock on hand was totally exhauſted; after the Decreaſe of the Revenues was obviouſly apparent to every one diſpoſed to conſider the State of the Funds impartially.

4*to*, The *Obſervers* next have Recourſe to an Account of the Charity Work-houſe at *Glaſgow*: They tell us the different Societies there *were to contribute* 570 l. per annum, *and that* 250 l. *more was deemed ſufficient to anſwer the Charge of the Houſe, but that their Magiſtrates, far from thinking an annual Rate to be levied from them in Proportion to the Rents of their Houſes, was the Method leaſt liable to Exception, that they levied this* 250 l. *by conſidering what each Inhabitant's Circumſtances enabled him to afford from Year to Year, which they ſignified to them by a Billet,* (*whence this Contribution got the Name of Bilget-Money*) *and it never failed of anſwering the Deſign; that within theſe three Weeks, they have declared, there is no further Occaſion for levying the Bilget-Money; and, in fine,* (*as informed by one of their Correſpondents*) *they expect in a few Years the Houſe will ſupply itſelf, without any of the annual Funds*, &c.

Nothing is more remote from our Intention than to derogate from the Honour of the Management at *Glaſgow*: They firſt ſet the Example, by erecting a Charity Work-houſe, and long may it flouriſh. But, ſince called upon, we ſhall ſhow, that our Poor at a Medium are, all Circumſtances conſidered, maintained rather at a lower Rate here than at *Glaſgow*, and that the Advantages of their Labour fall nothing ſhort, in proportion to the Numbers, to what hitherto has appeared from the Accounts of the Work of the Poor in that induſtrious Place; but cannot help noticing, in the Entry, the Candour of the Committee, in mentioning a Tax for ſecuring 2400 *l.* when they well know that no more is aimed at but 2200 *l.* the Council having agreed to drop the

intended Provision for those kept at hard Labour in the new House of Correction, and the Expence of levying any Rate that may be established. We must also observe what sort of Treatment this Council might have expected, had Bilget-money been practised in this Place, and that too by no established Rule, but what arose from guessing at the Circumstances of the Inhabitants. Nor is it Fact that the Bilget-money never failed in *Glasgow*, altho' they used a Compulsitory that, with many of the Inhabitants of this Place, would have been of no Avail, *viz.* Refusing to let Seats in the Church to those who were backward in paying their Quota. What a notable Remedy would this have proved with many of our keenest Opposers? Perhaps inverting the Sanction, and raising Bilget-money in case of not attending the Church, would have been with some a more effectual Compulsiture.

But, to come to the Point in hand, we conceive it absolutely ridiculous to compare the Expence at *Glasgow* with that of the Charity Work-house here, purely by considering the Numbers maintained in their respective Houses. At *Glasgow* they have no Out-pensioners, which is a considerable Charge in this Place: The necessary Repairs here must be much greater than there, and our Coals are vastly dearer: Our Surgeon has a Salary of 600 Merks a Year, and at *Glasgow* they are served for nothing: The Mistress, Clerk, Master Weaver, *&c.* having more than double Toil, must have larger Appointments in this Place: Not to mention a Rent of 22 *l. Sterl.* payable for some Years to come to the former Tacksman of the Area where the House was built. Is it candid then for Gentlemen, who know these things, to institute a Comparison of the Expence of the two Houses, purely by considering the Numbers of the Poor within the Walls? The Societies at *Glasgow* reserved a Part of their Funds for Out-pensioners; but our General Sessions, *&c.* assigned all theirs to the Managers of the Charity Work-house, the Benefit of which shall by-and-by be noticed.

The

The State of the Funds of the *Glaſgow* Work-houſe ſtood thus, at balancing their Accompts, *Candlemas* laſt:

	L.	*s.*	*d.*
The Mortifications and Donations, from the building and opening of the Houſe now about ſixteen Years ago, yields a Capital upwards of 2200 *l.* which lent at 4½ *per cent. inde* - - -	99	0	0
The Town Council, agreeable to the original Concert, pay yearly - - - - - -	140	0	0
The Merchants Houſe - - - - -	60	0	0
The Trades Houſe - - - - -	120	0	0
The Kirk Seſſions - - - - - -	250	0	0
The Truſtees to encourage the Manufacture of Flax, Cotton and Wool, continue to pay yearly	20	0	0
The Profits of Labour for the laſt Year -	62	4	0
Total - - - - - *L.*	751	4	0

The Poor in the Work-houſe of *Glaſgow* at preſent are ſhort of 200; but, ſuppoſing that to be the Number, it appears, from what is above, that the Charge of Maintenance is 3 *l.* 15 *s.* a Head, over and above all that is ſaved by the Labour of the Poor, by mending, making, waſhing Cloaths, *&c.* Now, when the total Profits, in the 16th Year of the Houſe, amounts only to 62 *l.* 4 *s.* it is left with every impartial Man to judge, whether the Committee's Expectation is well founded, that that Houſe will quickly ſupply itſelf without any of the annual Funds? We have never yet learned, that the Total ſaved and gained at *Glaſgow*, by the Labour of the Poor, has in any Degree equaled, even in proportion to the Numbers, what already has been exhibited by the Abſtract on the 18th Page of the Council's Memorial, taken from the Books of the Charity Work-houſe in this Place; nay, ſo far as we have been informed, their Savings are a meer Trifle; that which we have ſeen in the printed State, for the Third Year after the opening of their Hoſpital, being only 22 *l.* 3 *s.* 4 *d.* whereas the Savings the Third Year of our Charity Work-houſe was no leſs than 289 *l.*

On

On the other hand, ſuppoſing, in place of 3 *l.* 15 *s.* which the Charge at *Glaſgow* comes to a Head, that the Maintenance of 500 Poor here, including all neceſſary Charges of Management, Salaries, *&c.* was computed at 3 *l.* 14 *s.* each, *inde* - - - - - - - - *L.* 1850 0 0

And for Out-penſioners, (which is leſs than at a Medium it has ever come to) - - - 350 0 0

The Reſult would be no more than the Sum computed as ſufficient for the Support of the Charity Work-houſe - - - - - - - - 2200 0 0

Whence, conſidering the higher Charges here in the many Particulars above mentioned, and that this Houſe has ſubſiſted only a few Years in Compariſon of the other, it is ſelf-evident, that the Computation of the annual Expence, made by the Council, has been abundantly moderate.

And here, once for all, we give theſe Gentlemen to underſtand, that the Medium of the annual Expence was not ſtruck from the Medium Charge of the firſt Four Years, but from a Computation made by the Treaſurer *anno* 1747, going as low as poſſible, and allowing the neat Gains of the Houſe to ariſe to 120 *l.* a Year, altho' hitherto at a Medium it has not exceeded 96 *l.* 8 *s.* 5 *d.* Neither ſhall we here trouble ourſelves with the Obſervers curious Diſſertation upon Saving and Gaining, in the 22d and 23d Pages of their *Obſervations*, who are pleaſed to imagine, that the ſmall Premiums for Labour will in Time ſwallow up the total Gains; altho' it is unavoidable to remark, that 'tis truly chimerical to ſuppoſe, that the Savings within Doors may in Time ariſe to ſuch a Height, *ſo as to be more than anſwer any feared Decreaſe of the Collections, nay even ſo as to enable us to drop theſe Collections wholly, and all the other Funds too in Time; that is, the Profits of ſuch in the Houſe as can work will ſuffice to maintain themſelves and thoſe that cannot work too. And*, ſay they, *may we not expect that this will happen in a few Years, with reſpect to our Houſe,*

Houſe, with great Confidence, as the People in Glaſgow *do with regard to their Houſe?* ------ We congratulate the Gentlemen on their ſanguine Expectations, and ſhall not ſay *that they have not conſidered, or do not underſtand the Matters they are treating of, when they gravely endeavour to palm upon Folks ſuch Paradoxes as theſe:* But this we may adventure upon, that, if their Conjectures have any Foundation, is it not aſtoniſhing, that they ſhould be ſo terrified at a Poors-rate, which they, with great Confidence, expect in a few Years will be entirely ſuperfluous? For they well know, that it was never meant to raiſe any Sum but that which was altogether neceſſary, and guarded againſt any Poſſibility of Abuſe in making the annual Eſtimate; and as every Inhabitant will have Acceſs to ſee the Management, there is no Doubt but ſome would be ready to give the Alarm upon the ſmalleſt Miſapplication.

5to, It is of no Moment to notice the Obſervers *Fracas*, on the 20th Page, about the Medium Expence of the firſt Four Years, including Buildings and Repairs, which by this Time they do or may know was not far from 2800 *l.* a Year, and, excluſive of theſe, as in 16th Page of the Council's Memorial, 2300 *l.* 3 *s.* 11 *d.* But the Committee of Inhabitants having maintained that it was, in this laſt View, only 2178 *l.* the Obſervers, like good Combatants, determined not to quit an Inch of Ground, ſtoutly maintain the ſame thing to this Hour: For, ſay they, *the learned Gentleman, after ſetting down a Parcel of Figures, attempts to throw a Slur on the Committee of Heretors, by concluding with* 2300 l. 3 s. 11 d. *as the Medium, whence he infers that the Committee talkt at random; but, in order to this, he is pleaſed to bring into the Computation* 488 l. *as deburſed by the Town and Kirk Treaſurers in the Year* 1743, *before the Poors-houſe was opened*, i. e. *between the* 1*ſt of* January *and* 1*ſt of* July *that Year. Let any Man judge of the Propriety of this; and yet it is the fourth of this Sum that makes our* 2178 l. *up to his* 2300 l.

But is not this ſtill talking at random? For, had the Obſervers inquired, they would have found, that every Farthing of this 488 *l.* was paid out after the opening of the Houſe, by the Kirk and Town Treaſurers, to the Penſioners on their reſpective Rolls. The Town Treaſurer having kept the Management of his Funds a whole Year after the opening of the Houſe, and till the *Lammas* thereafter, and the Kirk Treaſurer managed his for ſome time after the 20th of *June* 1743, when the Houſe was opened: And, if the Obſervers truly knew this Fact, as ſome they correſpond with did, we conceive it ſomething more than talking at random, tenaciouſly to inſiſt upon this Point, and may be excuſed to conclude in their own Words upon this very Head; *Such are the Obſervations of theſe accurate Inſpectors of the Books, and ſuch the Operations of theſe nice Calculators*, upon which they would have the World to depend, while the plain Truth ſtill remains, that the Medium was 2300 *l.* 3 *s.* 11 *d.* and the Council extremely moderate in pitching upon 2200 *l.* as the Medium neceſſary in Time coming.

6*to*, But ſay the Obſervers, Pages 16th and 17th, *One Thing we have but lately been let into, which accounts indeed for the Neceſſity of a much larger Fund, in Proportion to the Poor in the Houſe, than is required in* Glaſgow, *and that is the Story of Out-penſioners: They ſay, by the original Plan, no more but* 200 l. *a Year was to be given that Way; that the Regulation was pretty well obſerved the firſt Year, the Sum given to the Poor out of the Houſe being* 206 l. 11 s. 6 d. *but the very next Year there was* 512 l. *given; the third,* 427 l. 5 s. 5 d. *the fourth,* 414 l. 9 s. 5 d. *and the fifth,* 365 l. 2 s. 2 d. to which they ſubjoin, *Is there not here a large Field for jobbing on, no leſs than* 900 l. *or, at leaſt* 700 l. *diſtributable at Pleaſure?* &c.

And have the Gentlemen indeed been all this while ignorant of what was patent to the whole City, having Acceſs to inſpect the Books, and particularly obvious to the meaneſt

meaneſt Obſerver? Where then was their Accuracy, when the Books were laid before them? or how can ſome of them account for their Conduct, if this is faulty, having the ſame opened up to them every quarterly Meeting, when Managers, and when they approved of the Management? Or was the laſt Memorial for the Committee of Inhabitants ſubſcribed by them without reading, and drawn for them by one who knew little of the Matter? If theſe Things are ſo, what Regard ſhould the Publick have to their Aſſertions? if otherways, how can they account for their own Conduct?

It is true, 200 *l.* was at firſt computed as a reaſonable Allowance for Out-penſioners, but, upon Enquiry, common Humanity forbade the ſtriking off the Roll Numbers who were truly Objects of Charity, and yet whoſe former Rank, as well as Connection with People of Condition, made it highly improper to lodge them under the ſame Roof with the begging Poor. It is not Fact, that no more than 206 *l.* was beſtowed this Way the firſt Year; this is one of the many Eſcapes of theſe acute Obſervers, who have forgot the large Sum of 488 *l.* paid out by the Kirk and Town Treaſurers, after the opening of the Houſe, to the weekly and quarterly Penſioners, before theſe Funds were committed to the Adminiſtration of the Managers and Treaſurer of the Charity-Work-houſe. And one Thing is remarkable, that from *Lammas* 1744, that the Managers of the Houſe had the Care of the Out-penſioners, the Sums beſtowed that Way have not only annually decreaſed, as mentioned in the 16th Page of the *Obſervations*, but have been gradually leſſened each Quarter without Exception: and in the Eſtimate, which gave Riſe to the Scheme for eſtabliſhing a Poor's Rate, the Medium is ſtruck at 350 *l.* for quarterly and weekly Penſioners, including caſual Supplies and Incidents for apprehending Beggars; and, no doubt, when a leſs Sum ſhall anſwer, the annual Rate will be proportionally diminiſhed. Where

then

then is the large Field for jobbing? or how can 900 *l.* or 700 *l.* be ſuppoſed diſtributable at Pleaſure? No Perſon can be inroll'd but by the Conſent of the Managers. The Council chuſe but a ſmall Part of that Body; who then are to be the Jobbers? or where is the Decency in ſome of the Signers of the *Obſervations*, who cordially approved of the Management with regard to Out-penſioners, while in the Direction? or can a ſingle Inſtance be condeſcended on of ſo much as an Attempt of a Job of that Kind, ſince the Managers of the Houſe had the Direction of the Funds? *But there would be no End of asking Queſtions upon this Subject*, as Gentlemen indulge their Fancies without taking the Trouble to know whether they are founded in Truth or not, and yet publiſh their Conjectures as if the Reſult of the deepeſt Obſervation.

We muſt make one Remark more, before diſmiſſing this Subject. The general Seſſions of *Glaſgow* have appropriate 250 *l.* a Year for their Poors Houſe, the Reſidue of the Collections is a Fund for other Penſioners. That flouriſhing City, by a moderate Computation, contains more than Half the Inhabitants of *Edinburgh*, and few there are who do not reſort to their Churches; ſhould then their Collections equal the half of thoſe in the City of *Edinburgh*, there would remain with that ſingle Society, a Sum near equal to the above Computation in the Scheme for the Council for Out-penſioners, *&c.* while by the ſame Proportion they would not have much more than one Half of the Out-penſioners of this City to ſupport, not to mention the reſerved Funds for that Purpoſe by the other Societies in that trading Town.

Having thus touched upon what appear'd the moſt material Facts in the *Obſervations*, we ſhall next glance at a few of the other Matters contained in this Performance.

We admit Meſſrs. *Hope* and *Hunter* did not approve of the Report drawn up by the Committee of the Merchant Company; but what then, theſe Gentlemen were of that Committee

mittee, and it never was our Choice to diſtinguiſh Names; the other ſixteen, who enquired into the Facts, were fully ſatisfied, as well as the great Majority of the Merchant Company. And, by the beſt Information we can have, the Gentlemen who differed were fully heard, and no Man but the Obſervers has, to this Hour, alledged (or, if they did, it has been kept a mighty Secret) *that the Meeting was not allowed to know any Thing of what was ſaid, or could be ſaid againſt the Report.*

The Merchant Company have ſaid, "We are fully ſatiſ-" fied, that the ſixth Article in the Council's *Memorial* is " fair and juſt," *i. e. that the other ordinary Funds for the Poor, beſides Collections, do not exceed* 600 l. per annum *at a Medium*, " only we obſerve the 600 *l.* is excluſive of " the two *per Cent.* Poors Money now propoſed to be ta-" ken away," to which this notable Obſervation is ſubjoined, Page fifth, *As this two* per *Cent. yields effective* 260 l. *is not this ſaying in Effect, that thoſe other ordinary Funds amounted to* 860 l. *but it was too glaring againſt the Council to ſay this plainly?* We ſhall only remark, that the Committee muſt be very fond of Obſervations, that could thus aim at a Reflection on ſo reſpectful a Company. But, after all, how could any Man of common Senſe think the *two per Cent.* was included in the 600 *l.* mentioned in the Propoſals? ſeeing, by them, all other Impoſitions or Burdens on Houſes for the Maintenance of the Poor, was to ceaſe and determine ſo ſoon as the Poors-rate ſhould be eſtabliſhed.

The Compariſon between the General Seſſions and General Aſſembly, with regard to an annual Rate for the Maintenance of the Widows and Children of Miniſters, is truly whimſical. The Aſſembly did not apply to Parliament, without the Conſent of the Majority of their Brethren; therefore the General Seſſions, where every Individual was called to be preſent, and a vaſt Majority actually aſſembled, ought not to have approved of the Eſtabliſhment of a Poors-

rate, without the Consent of this Committee, or the Majority of their Constituents, or rather of the whole Inhabitants. Conclusive Arguments indeed, and *worthy to be left to the Reflection of the Reverend Members*, as is recommended in the 12th Page of the *Observations*.

We take no Notice of the Criticism on the Conduct of the Honourable Bench, or the Call to the Faculty of Advocates, to do something more than transmit their Sentiments to such of their Number as are Members of Parliament, when a perpetual and not a temporary Law was the Subject of the Faculty's Deliberation, but firmly believe, that Call will never be answered; and may we not presume, that many of that Honourable Body would have a different Sentiment *now*, when they know, out of Regard to their Opinion, a temporary Law is only sought, which in a few Years Experience will discover, whether or not such Method for making Provision for the Poor is attended with any Inconveniency.

By the *Observation*, Page 25. it seems the Committee of Heretors do not chuse to have it thought, that, by their *Memorial*, they meant to call upon the College of Justice, to stand to their Privilege of being exeemed from a Poors-rate, but were only craving their Aid for defeating the Execution of the Law in case it should pass. But can the *Observers* flatter themselves, that the Supreme Court of Justice would countenance them in this Part of their Demand of rendering the Law elusory, which behoved to be the Case, if the small Quota payable by Individuals was not to be raised in the most summary Manner? At least, it is more than possible, that many of those who so violently oppose all legal Establishment of a Provision for the Poor, would not be over ready in contributing their Share, without some proper Sanction to inforce their Compliance.

Page 26, *The Committee is now informed, and they believe pretty exactly, that the Number of Freemen of the fourteen incorporated Bodies will not exceed 750, and we have the learned Gentleman admitting, in a Sort,*

that

that thoſe, which may or may not be taxed as the Aſſeſſors pleaſe, are about two Thirds of that Number, which is much more than ſufficient to ſhow, that, by this Scheme, the Leaders in the Council might always make ſure of the Elections of thoſe fourteen Members in it, which thoſe Corporations chuſe. And, in Page 27, it is aſſerted, *That the Poſſeſſors of the low rented Houſes may all be exeemed from this Tax.*

We are ſorry this Committee ſhould treat the incorporated Trades in *Edinburgh* with ſo much Contempt. What are the whole Freemen of *Edinburgh* poſſeſt of ſuch low rented Houſes as 30 *l. Scots*? For that muſt be the Caſe if there is any Senſe in the *Obſervation, that it is in a Sort admitted, that two Thirds of theſe may or may not be taxed.* But where is that Admiſſion to be found? Not ſure in the 27th Page of the Council's *Memorial*, there it is ſaid, it would puzzle the Committee, " to muſter up " 500 out of the incorporated Bodies of this City, and " of theſe not a Fifth will be found in ſuch contempti- " ble Circumſtances; and we hope, not a ſingle Man ſo de- " generate, as to betray his Truſt for half a Week's Pay of " the loweſt of his Journeymen." Is it then fair? Is it juſt to repreſent this as an Admiſſion, that two Thirds of 750 may or may not be taxed as the Aſſeſſors pleaſe? The Committee, in their laſt *Memorial*, ſuppoſed 1500 Members of the Incorporations of *Edinburgh* poſſeſſing low rented Houſes, they now admit, that the whole Number of Freemen does not exceed 750, and we cannot agree, that, Rich and Poor, they make among them all 500; and are far from thinking, that One hundred of theſe are in ſuch low Circumſtances, or a ſingle Man ſo abandoned, as to vote contrary to his Conſcience for being relieved of a few Shillings. Could Aſſeſſors be found degenerate enough to attempt Dealing in ſuch a Species of Corruption? Beſides, it is known to every one who does not wilfully ſhut their Eyes, that it is not " in the Power of the Aſſeſſors to exeem a ſingle

" Perſon,

" Perſon, but ſuch as have no Buſineſs, and are in poor Cir-
" cumſtances." And yet this Committee again tell us, *That the Poſſeſſors of low rented Houſes may all be exeemed from the Tax.* What Abſurdities are here; the whole Freemen, by their own Admiſſion, do not exceed 750; all of theſe, by the *Obſervation*, are ſuppoſed in low rented Houſes; no Man carrying on Buſineſs can be exeemed; and yet to make Senſe of the above *Obſervation*, two Thirds of the whole Freemen in *Edinburgh* may be taxed or not, juſt as the Aſſeſſors pleaſe. Strange Paradox indeed! Such Length, it ſeems can Prejudice carry Gentlemen of good Underſtanding; for we can never perſwade ourſelves, that, to obtain any Point, they would part with the Principles of Integrity.

Page 18. *The Committees paſs over the learned Gentleman's Repreſentation of the Proceedings at the two monthly Meetings of the Heretors and Inhabitants; he was preſent in both, but he is now acting as Counſel for the Town-Council, which was not preſent, and therefore may argue without regard to Facts known to himſelf; he was not obliged to inform his Conſtituents of them; here he is ſpeaking in their Names, and Nobody is to take Offence, if, in drawing a Paper for the Council, he takes ſuch Liberties.*

Would not Strangers imagine from this, that ſomething favourable for theſe Meetings had been concealed, or their Proceedings ſomehow diſguiſed or miſrepreſented? But, had either of theſe been the Caſe, is it imaginable, that the Committee, ſo liberal of their Informations to the Publick, and ſo courtly in their Manner of ſpeaking of every body that differs from them, would have ſuffered that to paſs without Notice? However, ſince theſe Meetings are mentioned, it is hoped it will give no juſt Cauſe of Offence, to take down a Part of the Speech made by the Preſes, at opening the firſt Meeting; he there declared, amongſt other things, in Words to this Purpoſe: " That if he could be aſſured,

" that

" that the Poors-rate would go no higher than what was " contained in a Paper that Day put into his Hand, he ſhould " not only think that the Magiſtrates and Council deſerved " the Thanks of the Inhabitants, for their great Care and " wiſe Proviſion made for the Poor, but he would be one " of the firſt, and made no Doubt but the Meeting would " join him, in ſigning an Application to Parliament for the " Eſtabliſhment of a Poors-rate by Law."---And the Council having ſince agreed to the Limitation of the Poors-rate to *7 per cent.* which can go no higher than what was contained in the Paper publiſhed at that Time, and removes the great Objection ariſing from the Uncertainty what each Inhabitant's Quota would come to, it might have been thought that all Scruples would have been removed, and that the Preſes of the Meeting would have uſed his ſuppoſed Intereſt with a good many of the Inhabitants then conveened to come into the Meaſure, or at leaſt have fairly ſet them an Example.---How far he has done ſo, or acted conſiſtent with what he then ſo publickly declared, he himſelf beſt knows, and it is left with the Committee of Obſervers (in which Number he now is) to acquaint the Publick. If this Notice is any how diſagreeable, it can be imputed to nothing but the above Obſervation, and poſſibly the burying in Oblivion what elſe paſt at any of theſe two Meetings will be reflecting no Diſhonour upon them.

As theſe Remarks have drawn out to an unexpected Length, we ſhall paſs over ſome of the Obſerves, chiefly remarkable for the Manner of Reaſoning, or pointing at the Drawer of the Council's Memorial rather than the Argument; but cannot help noticing, in a word, that the Obſervation drawn from the Act, renewing the Grant of the Two Pennies on the Pint of Ale, might have been ſpared, ſeeing the Committee do or may know, that that Fund is ſo far diminiſhed, and is burdened with ſo many annual Preſtations, as to leave no Room for drawing any Allotment from thence towards the Maintenance or Employment of the Poor: Only it is

 a little

a little merry to ſuppoſe, that any of the Inhabitants will retire without the Walls of the City, to evade the Payment of 7 *per cent.* on the Rents of their Houſes, as ſome Brewars formerly did, to elude the Payment of a Tax of 8 ½ *per cent.* of the Drink brewed by them, as if there was any Compariſon betwixt a Trifle paid for a Houſe, and 8 ½ *per cent.* upon the vaſt Quantities of Ale brewed by ſome Men of very extenſive Buſineſs in that way.

Before concluding, we can't help noticing, that the Obſervations recommend to the Peruſal of the Inhabitants a Pamphlet, lately reprinted here, with regard to the Poors-rates in *England*; and if a formidable Title-page can ſtartle any one, or make them take the Alarm, it may have its Effect: But we join Iſſue in recommending the Performance itſelf, ſeeing it ſtrenuouſly maintains, that a Poors-rate, under proper Regulations, is an excellent Inſtitution. It ſuppoſes Two, Three, or even Four Shillings a Pound not to be going too far: What then would that Author have thought, had he peruſed Propoſals for a Poors-rate, circumſcribing the Payment by the Inhabitants to ſomething under One Shilling and three Halfpence *per* Pound, upon the real Rent of their Houſes?---The great Abuſe complained of in *England* ariſes from the Church-wardens and Overſeers being nominated from among the loweſt of the People, and having a Power to make ſuch Rates *as they ſhall think fit*, whereby, eſpecially when Part of the Pariſh conſiſts in Lands, they are apt to lay on heavy Rates, exact the ſame from the greater Heretors, and let the little Proprietors of Houſes go free, in order to ſecure a Majority of Votes for their Re-election into Office: But what has that to do with an Eſtabliſhment limited not to exceed ſo much *per cent.* and where Great and Small muſt pay their Quota, in exact Proportion to the Rent of their Poſſeſſions, and where the Eſtimate of the Sums annually neceſſary comes to be made by People of Condition, and that too ſubject to the Controul of Perſons of the firſt Rank in this Place?

But,

But, ſay the Obſervers, Page 30. *the aſſumed Principle*, "That every Tax on the Inhabitant of a Houſe, as ſuch, "falls on the Landlord," *is fully illuſtrated in the above mentioned Pamphlet*.---But, alas! what is to be found there? Why, truly, that if a Tenant cannot afford to take a Poſſeſſion at ſuch a Rent, and pay the Poors-rate over and above, he muſt content himſelf with a ſmaller Poſſeſſion. But, what then? does that hinder another in better Circumſtances to take it? Beſides, this is applied by the Author to Poſſeſſions of Land, where, by the Addreſs of more numerous Houſeholders, the Tax is raiſed to an exorbitant Height, in order to keep themſelves free; and it is well known, altho' the 2 *per cent.* has long ſubſiſted in this Place, that no Landlord got a Farthing leſs Rent, or any Proprietor ſold his Houſe a Penny cheaper.---Hard indeed it would be, was the whole to fall on the Landlord; and poſſibly the Alarm upon this Head is the true Cauſe of the Oppoſition from that Quarter: But ſure, if there be any Truth in the Obſervation, the Inhabitants by no means conſult their Intereſt, by ſtrenuouſly oppoſing a legal Proviſion for the Poor, and making themſelves the Dupes of their more able Leaders, who have no other *Salvo* for this Remark, but roundly aſſerting, in the 19th Page, *That the Intereſt of every Landlord and every Houſeholder in Town is connected in the Matter and inſeparable*.--- Perhaps this may ſatisfy: *Ipſe dixit* in ancient Times was a *Salvo* for every Difficulty.

Upon the whole, the Council had nothing in View but the Intereſt of the Community; and, whatever may be the preſent Sentiments of their Opponents, or their Manner of treating this Subject, the Town Council have the Conſolation to think they have done their Duty; they have aimed at a wiſe and regular Proviſion for the Poor and Needy, and been ſo far from ſhewing a tenacious Turn of Mind, that they chearfully yielded to every reaſonable Propoſal for improving the Scheme, and cementing the Inhabitants, for facilitating the ſalutary Purpoſe of eſtabliſhing an equal and

regular

regular Proviſion for the Suſtenance and Employment of the Poor, and will chearfully acquieſce in whatever ſhall appear moſt expedient to the Wiſdom of the Nation.

JOS. WILLIAMSON.

N. B. The *Obſervers*, Page 21, ſet forth, *That the Gentleman has told us, we are welcome to the Peruſal of ſuch Books as were little or nothing to our Purpoſe, but that we cannot get Copies of thoſe we are deſirous to ſee and conſider* ad longum *on his Motion to the Council, but muſt ſtate ourſelves as Petitioners for them; that is, we muſt wave the Right which we conceive we have to theſe Copies, and ſubmit to the Council's Pleaſure, whether we ſhould get them or not: This they need not expect; and, if by Might, they deprive us of the Benefit of this our Right, we muſt wait with Patience, till we can be furniſhed with a Power ſuperior to theirs to enforce it*, &c.

The Gentlemen beſt know what is intended by this, altho' indeed their Hint is pretty obvious, as if it was meant to procure a Delay elſewhere, on Pretence they were not furniſhed with Materials: But ſure they were never told, that, on a Motion to the Council, any Copies were refuſed them, nor was any ſuch Motion ever made by the Gentleman who acquainted them; if they had any Thing to ask they might apply to the Council. But this, they now ſay, is not to be expected; why then, they have themſelves to blame; for ſure they can't complain for not ſeeing what they won't vouchſafe to aſk a Sight of; nor can they, in Truth, ſay they were ever denied the Books of the Charity Work-houſe: The total Valuation of *Edinburgh* was publiſhed in their own Paper; ſo that they could be no Strangers to it; and no Paper tranſmitted to the City Member was ever with-held from their Agent at *London*.

J. W.